

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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SOME DUTY.

And I?

Is there some desert or some pathless sea
Where thou, good God of angels, wilt send me?
Some oak for me to rend; some sod,
Some rock for me to break;
Some handful of his corn to take
And scatter far afield,
Till it, in turn, shall yield
Its hundredfold
Of grains of gold
To feed the waiting children of my God?
Show me the desert, Father, or the sea.
Is it thine enterprise? great God, send me;
And, though this body lie where ocean rolls,
Count me among all faithful souls.

— *Edward Everett Hale.*

AN IDEAL CHURCH.

"Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." — JOHN vi. 12.

These words were spoken by Jesus concerning barley-loaves, but they accurately describe the spirit and method of his life and work in his contact with human kind. He was pre-eminently a gatherer-up of the

fragments. He himself said that he came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. He showed his deepest thought and tenderest love in the parable of the Lost Sheep, and in that divinest of parables, the Prodigal Son. He championed all weak and forgotten, all poor and lowly things. He was the trampled woman's friend, the hard-pressed sinner's refuge, the little children's lover, the consoler of the desolate and forlorn. He himself lived as

A WONDROUS FRAGMENT,

colossal and glorious, but despised and rejected, cut off from the ordinary life of his day; and he took up the cause of the world's fragments, and shared their lot. Sorry, sinful women blessed him with repentant tears. Blind beggars by the wayside knew him. Proud scribes hated him. Conceited Pharisees feared him. Great doctors of the law failed to understand him. But poor sinners clung to him, and the lonely loved him, and children came to his arms, and the shattered brain found healing when he came nigh. He did not break the bruised reed. He despised not the day of small things. He led publicans and sinners into the heavenly kingdom. No poor, trembling heart too far away for that love to reach it; no sinful conscience too stained for that mercy to cleanse it; no child too humble for that brotherly love to bless it; no lonely, sightless fragment by the wayside, told by the people to hold its peace, too obscure for that watchful eye to see it. Everywhere he seems to lose all sense of the multitude, and to have in his mind just the one neglected spirit there. You remember how once the throng pressed round him; but the throng was nothing to him, for presently he asks,

WHO TOUCHED ME?

Who? Why, everybody seemed to be touching him. He could not move for the throng, and they told him so; but he knew better. Only one had really touched him, only one with a purpose,—one poor fragment, who came in her shrinking way, with her beautiful, simple faith, just to touch the hem of his garment. But that timid, shrinking touch was the one touch that thrilled through him; for it was the touch of soul to soul, the touch of reverence and trust, of longing and expectancy. You remember, again, how once the people thronged the streets of Jericho to see him go by; but they were nothing to him,—so many curious eyes, and nothing more. But, in the heart of one despised man there, there had dawned the sunlight of a new and heavenly day. So Jesus gathered up that humble fragment, singled him out, and brought all heaven into his soul with the word, “Zaccheus, come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.” Now I think this characteristic of the work of Jesus should be the characteristic of ours,—that we should be able and willing to take up the basket at the bidding of the Master, to gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost; and we may be sure that his church is never brought so near to him, to the inmost heart of him, as when it takes notice of the forgotten, finds room for the unconsidered, seeks the wanderer, spreads the table for the homeless, considers the young, and recovers the lost. Do you see to what this leads? Straight as a line to this,—that the church itself is to be

A MISSIONARY CHURCH,

as a united home for all; and the duty is not discharged and the ideal is not reached by keeping a mission church elsewhere. A mission church a mile away is too much like a poor relation at the back door. I cannot think that is the ideal, and yet the tendency is that way. It is with the mission work of the church as it is with the charity of the world, which is more and more apt to degenerate into the mere contribution of a guinea. But true charity is not a guinea subscription: it is contact and sympathy, co-operation, and consideration. The old word is, “Blessed is he who con-

sidereth the poor!” So in the church the duty is not discharged by providing for the gathering up of fragments beyond its borders. What is needed is not the multiplication of new kinds of ministries, but a widening of the spirit and sphere of the old; not new sorts of churches, but new inspirations in existing ones. A mission church, then, intended for the ignorant and poor, though possibly necessary and very useful in certain circumstances, could never be anything better than a somewhat painful necessity. The church itself ought to be free enough and generous enough and homely enough and Christ-like enough to include all, to find a place for the poor man’s psalm, the lonely woman’s grief, the solitary’s prayer, the child’s necessities, and the sinner’s shame.

THE WORD “HOME”

expresses best what the church ought to be. And in the home, the true home, there is room for all; and the good home-father, the wise home-mother, knows how to deal with all. The weakling has its corner, and the babe its little haven, and the evil-doer his place of penitence; and even the place of the absent prodigal is there for the seeking. We all know, or ought to know, what this homelikeness is in daily life. As soon as a man’s work is done, he is glad to put into the dear old port again, to forget for a while the worry and the storm, to unbend, to be a child among children, a lover of simple things, the comforter, the providence of the home. Once there, what new sympathies are awakened, and in what different perspective all things are seen! It should be so in the church. The sympathies, the affections, the tastes, the providences of the home ought to be the sympathies, the affections, the providences of the church. In the home the ideal is attained just in proportion as the fragments are gathered up,—each one considered, each one interested each one sympathized with, each one abiding in peace, each one loved. So in the church the ideal is attained just in proportion as the church, to use an old homely phrase, becomes “mother church,” able and willing to embrace all, to make house-room and heart-room for all,—not a church for the rich nor a church for the

poor, but a church for all, to whose gracious hearth all may gather, and under whose broad and kindly roof all may find a welcome and a home. In such a church the teaching would be merciful and pitiful, human and simple, hopeful and helpful; and every one would hear and worship for others as well as for himself. If the teacher spoke to comfort the weak and to cheer the sorrowful, they who are strong and happy would not be impatient, as those who bring an empty basket into which no bread falls: they would weep with those who weep, as well as rejoice with those who rejoice. Or, if the word were a word of exultation and victory, a word of strength and cheer, the weary and heavy-laden would not moan because the message seemed not for them. They would bless God for joy that was not theirs, they would exult in triumphs they had not won. They would mount on the wings of another's ecstasy, and so would the human fragments be gathered up into

AN UNBROKEN BROTHERHOOD.

—John Page Hopps.

THE STILL HOUR.

WITHIN.

To fail in finding gifts, and still to give;
To count all trouble ease, all loss as gain;
To learn in dying as a self to live,—
This dost thou do, and seek thy joy in pain?
Rejoice that not unworthy thou art found
For Love to touch thee with his hand divine.
Put off thy shoes, thou art on holy ground;
Thou standest on the threshold of his shrine.
But canst thou wait in patience, make no sign,
And where in power thou fail'st—oh, not in will!—

See sore need served by other hands than thine,
And other hands the dear desires fulfil,
Hear others gain the thanks that thou wouldst win,

Yet be all joy? Then hast thou entered in.

Men say they dare not neglect the sober realities of life, for they are from God. Neither should we dare to neglect the brightness and happiness and joy of life, for they are from God just as truly. The sun shines by God's will just as truly as the clouds sometimes intervene between us and the sun by his will.—*The Christian Leader.*

Be sure of it, there is no skill or power upon earth that can compare with the divine insight and sympathy whereby, without a word, it may be, the certainty of being understood is borne into some lowly heart, and the mist of despondency is scattered from some weary soul, as hope again rises and endeavor seems worth while.—*The Churchman.*

There is another attitude as important as that of truth and of duty for the development of great personality. It is the attitude described in the word "love." Ever and everywhere be a lover! The occupying of such a point of truth and duty and love will make you a personality which shall be like a cathedral, strong with the strength of buttressed principles, beautiful with the memory of holy deeds, and seen from afar as the symbol of the presence of God.—*Charles F. Thwing.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.]

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 373 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.?

The following books are offered by the Milton Branch. Address Miss Louise W. Hobbey, Box 334, Milton, Mass. First request must contain reference.

Educational.

"Plane and Solid Geometry," Peirce; "Natural Philosophy," Peck; "Beginner's Geometry," Hill; "First Steps in Numbers," "Elementary Arithmetic," Bradbury; "Franklin's Arithmetic"; "German Grammar," Tiarks; "German Reader"; "French Grammar," Otto; "Atlas"; "Geography"; "The World"; "Elements of Logic," Whately; "History of the Netherlands," Motley; "Young Ireland," Duffy.

Children's Books.

"Poems"; "Book of Nature," vol. i. Hooker; "Drawing for Young Children"; "How Plants Grow," Gray; "Daisy Ward's Book"; "Story without End"; "New Night

Caps"; "Bread upon the Waters"; "John Gay; or, Work for Boys"; "Dotty Dimple"; "Sink or Swim"; "Captain Horace"; "Minnie's Pet Monkey"; "Myra Sherwood's Cross"; "The Talbury Girls"; "Bessie Harrington's Venture."

Religious.

"James Freeman Clarke," Edward E. Hale; "Discourses on Various Subjects"; "Inquiry of Religion," Henry Ware; "The Lord's Song, and Other Sermons"; "Memorial and Biographical Sketches," James Freeman Clarke; "Heavenly Blessedness," Rev. Chauncey Giles; "Philochristus"; "Bible for Learners," vol. iii.; "Ecce Deus"; "Life of the Saviour," Henry Ware, Jr.; "Fellowship"; "Talks to Young Men," Robert Collyer; "Thy Kingdom Come," Henry Wilder Foote; "Psalms and Hymns"; "Hymns," Frederick William Faber; "Thoughts," Channing; "Testament and Psalms"; "Lessons on the Life of Christ for Children"; "Memoir of Samuel J. May"; "Martyria."

Poetry.

"Christmas with the Poets"; "Enoch Arden," Tennyson; "Poets of the Elizabethan Age"; "Poems," Robert Burns; "Sacred Poems," N. P. Willis; "The Cathedral"; "The Princess," Tennyson; "Prisoner of Chillon," Byron; "Wild Flowers"; "Later Poems," Hattie Howard; "Idyls of the King," Tennyson; "Ultima Thule," Longfellow; "Poems of Slavery"; "Ulysses among the Phæacians," Bryant; "Poems," Bryant; "Quiet Hours"; "He giveth Songs"; "The Gathering of the Lilies"; "Indian Summer"; "Lady Geraldine," Mrs. Browning.

Miscellaneous.

"Histoire Universelle" (French); "Life in the Woods," Thoreau; "Ancient Egypt"; "History of the Art of Design"; "Gertrude," Rev. W. Sewell; "Thorndale; or, Conflict of Opinions," William Smith; "Light on the Cloud," M. J. Savage; "Love does it All," I. L. Hildyard; "Judas Maccabæus and Jewish War of Independence"; "Home Book for Mothers and Daughters"; "Meaning and Origin of Fairy Tales"; "Literary Landmarks in London," Laurence Hutton; "Nooks and Corners of Old New York"; "Yorkshire Family Romance"; "Her Dear-

est foe," Mrs. Alexander; "Soldiers and their Science"; "General Stevenson"; "The Abbot," Walter Scott; "The Army of Virginia, 1862"; "Sailing on the Nile"; "Talks on Practical Subjects," Marion Harland; "Lectures to Young Women."

REQUESTS.

[*Read direction at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send requests for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

I will be very thankful for reading for myself and children. I would like to have a correspondent. I have six children, four girls and two boys. The oldest are girls. I would like to have reading suitable for them to keep them entertained at home, as we have no school in summer. Mrs. Lula T. Hutcherson, Sandy Ridge, Stokes County, North Carolina.

Mrs. William Joyce, Dobyns, Patrick County, Virginia, will be glad of any reading.

Miss Ada M. Fields, Chelsea, Indian Territory, living in a remote country place, will be glad of any reading.

Miss Lucinda Griffin, Nettle Ridge, Virginia, a sufferer from rheumatism, will be thankful for reading.

J. D. Broadaway, Fry, North Carolina, asks for "All Sorts and Conditions of Men," by W. Besant.

Mrs. N. W. Gregory, Bullock, North Carolina, teaching in a country place, asks for a "Natural Philosophy"; "History of United States"; "Elements of Astronomy"; "The Greatest Thing in the World," by Drummond.

I live in the mountains of North Carolina on a farm. Have four children. The two youngest are almost twins, there being only sixteen months between them. I have been a great sufferer all my married life, consequently I scarcely ever get to go to church or visit even my nearest neighbor. Reading is my greatest pleasure and only pastime. I will be so glad for any that you kind people will send me. I would especially like the numbers of *Munsey's Magazine*. My little boy of six wants a good first reader or speller badly. Thanking you in advance, address Mrs. N. M. Carter, Blackstone, North Carolina.

Mrs. Virginia E. Hardigree, Winder Georgia, R. F. D., No. 2, will appreciate any reading that may be sent.

Mrs. J. R. Wagoner, Nettle Ridge, Virginia, a poor woman with a large family, asks for any magazines.

I live away out in the country, twenty-five miles from any town. I have a family of three children, and in your Book Club I see offered "Emerson's Music, Vocal and Instrumental," or "Willmot's Complete Music Reader," part song and chorus book, which I should love to have very much for my children. I have a girl fifteen and a boy fourteen years of age, and would like any reading for them. Mrs. Clara Patterson, Blaine, Tillamook County, Oregon.

I am a farmer's little girl. My mother has just died, and left me with the family to care for. I would be very thankful for some reading suitable for myself and three other little girls. I am just thirteen years old, and the other girls, twins, ten years, and the baby seven years old. We are too poor to buy reading. Mollie Sapp, Heareford, North Carolina.

Mrs. Sallie Gibson, Ellerbe Post-office, North Carolina, asks for Maury's "Elementary Geography," and an English grammar.

Every Other Sunday is asked for by Mrs. Lora Merriek, East Hampstead, New Hampshire.

The following school-books are asked for by Agnes Ballard, Ansonville, North Carolina: Homer's First and Second Reader, Second Arithmetic, Fifth Reader, and a Primer.

I have two children. My little girl is twelve years old, and my boy ten, who unite with me in thanking you for the nice books and papers they have received, and beg for a continuance of the same. We have all enjoyed them, and passed them on to others to read. We are too poor to buy books, as we can only make a living on our small farm, and our land is poor. We have sadly missed the *Cheerful Letter* for several months. Lila C. Herndon, Indian-town, Orange County, Virginia.

Mr. W. P. Wilson, Heareford, Stokes County, North Carolina, would be glad to receive the following text-books: "Anatomy," Gray; "Materia Medica," Butler.

Youth's Companion is asked for by J. W. Phonts, Olney, North Carolina.

My Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I take this method of thanking you good people for the good reading matter I have received and enjoyed so much. I would be glad to receive the following books and papers, if any one could send them, regularly: *Harper's Bazar*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and a paper called *Sabbath Reading*; also books, "Stepping Heavenward," "Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis, or any other books, would be gladly received and enjoyed by others than myself. Miss Lillie Edwards, Roaring River, North Carolina.

I would be glad to receive any reading matter that you would like to send me. I live in the country. Have no children to keep me company, and am always so lonely when my husband is gone. We have neither church nor Sunday-school near. Mrs. Avie Turner, Nebo, Texas.

Mrs. Mary House, Somerset, Pennsylvania, requests Unitarian literature and other reading. She is living in a mining camp. Is alone nearly all day, during her husband's working hours. The people are mostly Germans, and there seems to be a lack of congeniality. She is hungry for reading. She has no children, and her life is a lonely one. She feels that she is among them, but not one of them. She is a native of Texas, and can but feel that her life would be much brighter by having a few companions, such as books and magazines.

"In His Steps" is asked for by Mary B. Johnson, Turnwater, Washington.

Mrs. Katie Merritt, Dobyn, Patrick County, Virginia, wishes to thank all who have remembered her, and hopes for a continuance of the kind favors.

I have been a reader of *The Cheerful Letter* a year, and I do enjoy it so much; and the kind lady who sends it to me will never know the great happiness she thereby brings to my life. I feel that I must not let another year pass without a word of thanks to all of the dear friends for the nice books, music, and reading matter that has been sent me, for it has been such a pleasure and comfort to me. If it is not asking too much, I would be glad if some one would send me "Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow," by Jerome K. Jerome; "Lady of the Lake," by Scott; "History of England," by Macaulay; and "Stepping Heavenward." Miss Clara Greer, Blackstone, North Carolina.

I want to thank those of you who sent me reading three or four years ago, and to ask if some one would kindly send me *Munsey's Magazine* or the *Woman's Home Companion* each month after reading it. My neighbor, Mrs. Jacob Walter, would be very glad to receive German reading of any kind. She cannot read English. She has five children: the oldest twelve, the youngest three. Her address is Naper, Boyd County, Nebraska. Miss Annie Jensen, Naper, Boyd County, Nebraska.

Rev. J. B. Olive, Swansboro, North Carolina, would like to have magazines, periodicals, books, or any other reading matter suitable for a minister sent to him this summer.

Mrs. Lessie Parker, Fry, Anson County, North Carolina, would be pleased very much to receive any of E. P. Roe's books. I so much desire "He Fell in Love with his Wife," and some good story papers.

Many thanks to the kind friends for the reading they have been sending me. I enjoy reading *The Cheerful Letter* very much. I would be glad of some books and magazines for my children. I have four, the oldest a boy ten years, and a girl eight. I would be glad of a Second and Third

Reader or any picture-books, and some correspondent. Mrs. Nannie Shelton, Verano, Patrick County, Virginia.

Miss Dovie Harger, Dobyn, Patrick County, Virginia, asks for reading for herself and brothers.

Mrs. Mary C. Wood and Mrs. Emma M. Martin, Shuff, Patrick County, Virginia, will be very glad for any good reading. They are members of the church, and live remote from a public library. I have been a member of *The Cheerful Letter* exchange for some time: only one paper has been sent me. I should be very glad if some one would send me a Dictionary, also "Robinson Crusoe." My sisters Mamie and Lucy would like a correspondent, fourteen and twelve years of age. Fannie Aldredge, Dobyn, Patrick County, Virginia.

Miss Lottie B. Reed, Athens, Maine, asks for any of Christina G. Rossetti's writings.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[Contributions to this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, 26 Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.]

[The editor has hesitated a little in regard to the wisdom of printing the following selection, so at variance with the "Gentle Measures," which are also wise and practical measures, recommended by Jacob Abbott in the book which we offer every month in the Book Club of *The Cheerful Letter*. Her objection is not that mothers will be likely to follow the method advocated in the extract from John S. C. Abbott's book. Probably mothers of this description, if they ever existed, are now as extinct as the dodo-bird. Her objection is that those who cannot understand the difference between governing children and governing them by harsh methods—or between punishment and severe, even cruel punishment—will be confirmed in the opposite habit of allowing anarchy in the household, and the reckless disobedience and selfishness of the present day. On the whole, however, it may be best to have every point of view. Perhaps mothers who have had practical experience will express themselves in articles which will be welcome to the editor of the Mother's Council, as well as to the editor of the paper.]

MATERNAL AUTHORITY.

I. Obedience is absolutely essential to proper family government. Without this all other efforts will be in vain. You may pray with

and for your children; you may strive to instruct them in religious truth; you may be unwearied in your efforts to make them happy, and to gain their affection. But if they are in habits of disobedience, your instructions will be lost and your toil in vain. And by *obedience* I do not mean languid and dilatory, yielding to repeated threats, but prompt and cheerful acquiescence in parental commands. Neither is it enough that a child should yield to your *arguments* and *persuasions*. It is essential that he should submit to your authority. . . .

It is certainly the duty of parents to convince their children of the reasonableness and propriety of their requirements. This should be done to instruct them, and to make them acquainted with moral obligation. But there should always be *authority* sufficient to enforce prompt obedience, whether the child can see the reason of the requirement or not. Indeed, it is impossible to govern a child by mere argument. Many cases must occur in which it will be incapable of seeing the reasonableness of the command. And often its wishes will be so strongly opposed to duty that all efforts to convince will be in vain. The first thing, therefore, to be aimed at is to bring your child under perfect subjection. Teach him that he must obey you. Sometimes give him your reasons, again withhold them. But let him perfectly understand that he is to do as he is bid. Accustom him to immediate and cheerful acquiescence in your will. This is obedience. And this is absolutely essential to good family government. Without this, your family will present one continued scene of noise and confusion; the toil of rearing up your children will be almost insupportable; and, in all probability, your heart will be broken by their future licentiousness or ingratitude.

II. *We now come to the inquiry, How is this habit of obedience to be established?* This is not so difficult a matter as many imagine. It does not require profound learning or a mysterious skill which pertains but to the few. Where do you find the best regulated families? Are they in the houses of the rich? Do the children of our most eminent men furnish the best patterns for imitation? Obviously not. In some of the most humble dwellings we find the beautiful spectacle of an orderly and well-regulated family. On

the other hand, in the mansions of the wealthiest, or most eminent men of our country, we may often find a family of rude girls and ungovernable boys, a picture of wild misrule. It is not greatness of talent or profound learning which is requisite to teach a child obedience. The principles by which we are to be guided are very simple and very plain.

1. Never give a command which you do not intend shall be obeyed. There is no more effectual way of teaching a child disobedience than by giving commands which you have no intention of enforcing. A child is thus habituated to disregard its mother; and in a short time the habit becomes so strong, and the child's contempt for the mother so confirmed, that entreaties and threats are alike unheeded.

"Mary, let that book alone," says a mother to her little daughter, who is trying to pull the Bible from the table. Mary stops for a moment, and then takes hold of the book again. Pretty soon the mother looks up, and sees that Mary is still playing with the Bible. "Did not you hear me tell you to let that book alone?" she exclaims. "Why don't you obey?"

Mary takes away her hand for a moment, but is soon again at her forbidden amusement. By and by down comes the Bible upon the floor. Up jumps the mother, hastily, giving the child a passionate blow, and exclaims, "There, then, obey me next time." The child screams, and the mother picks up the Bible, saying, "I wonder why my children do not obey me better."

This is not a very interesting family scene, but every one of my readers will admit that it is not an uncommon one. And is it strange that a child thus managed should be disobedient? No. She is actually led on by her mother to insubordination; she is actually *taught* to pay no heed to her directions. Even the improper punishment which sometimes follows transgression is not inflicted on account of her disobedience, but for the accidental consequences. In the case above described, had the Bible not fallen, the disobedience of the child would have passed unpunished. Let it be an immutable principle in family government that your word is law.

And is there any difficulty in enforcing obedience to any definite command? Take

the case of the child playing with the Bible. A mild and judicious mother says distinctly and decidedly to her child, "My daughter, that is the Bible, and you must not touch it." The child hesitates for a moment, but, yielding to the strong temptation, is soon playing with the forbidden book. The mother immediately rises, takes the child, and carries her into her chamber. She sits down, and says calmly, "Mary, I told you not to touch the Bible, and you have disobeyed me. I am very sorry, for now I must punish you."

Mary begins to cry, and to promise not to do so again. "But, Mary," says the mother, "you have disobeyed me, and you must be punished."

Mary continues to cry, but the mother seriously and calmly punishes her. She inflicts real pain, pain that will be remembered. She then says, "Mary, it makes mother very unhappy to have to punish you. She loves her little daughter, and wishes to have her a good girl."

She then, perhaps, leaves her to herself for a few minutes. A little solitude will deepen the impression made.

In five or ten minutes she returns, takes Mary in her lap, and says, "My dear, are you sorry that you disobeyed mother?" Almost any child would say "Yes!"

"Will you be careful and not disobey me again?"

"Yes, mother."

"Well, Mary," says her mother, "I will forgive you so far as I can, but God is displeased. You have disobeyed him as well as me. Do you wish me to ask God to forgive you?"

"Yes, mother," answers the child.

The mother then kneels with her daughter, and offers a simple prayer for forgiveness, and the return of peace and happiness. She then leads her out, humbled and subdued. At night, just before she goes to sleep, she mildly and affectionately reminds her of her disobedience, and advises her to ask God's forgiveness again. Mary, in child-like simplicity, acknowledges to God what she has done, and asks him to forgive her, and take care of her during the night.

When this child awakes in the morning, will not her young affections be more strongly fixed upon her mother in conse-

quence of the discipline of the preceding day? As she is playing about the room, will she be likely to forget the lesson she has been taught, and again reach out her hand to a forbidden object? Such an act of discipline tends to establish a general principle in the mind of the child which will be of permanent operation, extending its influence to every command, and promoting the general authority of the mother and subjection of the child.

I know that some mothers say that they have not time to pay so much attention to their children. But the fact is that not one-third of the time is required to take care of an orderly family which is necessary to take care of a disorderly one. To be faithful in the government of your family is the only way to save time. Can you afford to be distracted and harassed by continued disobedience? Can you spare the time to have your attention called away every moment from the business in which you are engaged by the mischievousness of your wilful children?

[To be continued.]

—*"The Mother at Home," John S. C. Abbott.*

There is one thing in the article quoted above with which we can cordially agree,—the statement that obedience is necessary to good family government. Also, it is the part of the mother to train her children to obedience. Very few young children are obedient by nature, and they need to be taught obedience by careful training. For this very reason, the mother should not be displeased with an infant of three years old because it has not yet learned what it is her business to teach. The little faults of a child of this age should not be regarded as *sins*, but merely as the stumbles and failures of one who has not yet learned to walk alone.

The punishment in the case narrated is out of all proportion to the offence. Besides, it is not the *severity* of punishment, but its *certainly* that makes it effectual. Jacob Abbott mentions a case where a family of children were trained to perfect obedience by no heavier a punishment than being made to sit for a minute or two on the step of a flight of stairs.

Here the course seems to us a mistaken one from first to last. Even to say, "That is the Bible, and you must not touch it," was a pity. We do not want a child to connect disagreeable ideas, involving prohibition and punishment, with the Bible. Rather put the Bible out of her reach, and let the lesson of not meddling, if desirable, be given by means of some pamphlet or paper-covered book.

Apparently the punishment in this case was a severe whipping. This form of punishment is not only cruel, it is sometimes dangerous. "Measures like these shock the whole nervous system, sometimes with the excitement of pain and terror, and always, probably, with that of resentment and anger. In some cases this excitement is extreme. The excessively delicate organization of the brain, through which such agitations reach the sensorium, and which in children of an early age is in its most tender and sensitive state of development, is subjected to a most intense and violent agitation."

There is something ridiculous in the expression of displeasure at the little faults of a young child. Such displeasure is either pretence or ill-temper. Let some little penalty be inflicted, but in a cheerful, good-humored manner, and without the least sign of personal feeling. The mother may say: "Oh, the poor book! He is hurt. Poor thing, we must put him to bed; he must have a good rest. We will put him to bed on the shelf. And now what shall we do to help Mary to remember to mind when mamma tells her not to touch? I think we had better put her on a shelf, too, for a little while. Here is a shelf; we will put her in the corner of the sofa. Let me see how still Mary can sit. If she is *very* still, she may get down in five minutes."

Of course, an older child may require different handling. The punishment may be to be sent out of the room, or to be sent to bed an hour earlier than usual. But the important thing to remember is, first, that punishment should be certain, not severe; and, next, that it should be inflicted with good temper.

"When you punish, punish good-naturedly."

The greatest mistake of all is to tell an infant that "God is displeased with her."

Few people will believe this to be true; and what can be worse for a child, whose ideas of God are vague, than to create in her mind an image of a powerful, stern being looking down on her with anger (for this it is to her thoughts) whenever she commits some childish fault? Was this the way Jesus taught us to treat little children, when he said, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father"?

L. F. C.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE NESTS OF BIRDS.

It is wonderful to study the different ways in which birds build their homes, and learn how many trades they represent.

There are miners, who make holes and lay their eggs far below the surface of the earth. There are masons, who make mortar of clay, and from that fashion their nests. There are carpenters, who rivet their homes to the trees, first by making holes in the tree, and then by putting in wooden pegs.

There are basket-makers, some of them very rude in construction, others very elaborate and beautiful.

There are platform-builders, who not only make a nest, but in addition have a platform for the male to sit upon while the eggs are hatching, and later use it for the whole family as we use a piazza.

The robin prefers to work in the rain, perhaps on account of his English blood.

The humming-bird always builds its nest under an overhanging thorn or twig, and when it rains hangs upon this twig two leaves, one pointing one way and one the other, so that the nest is completely sheltered. After the rain is over, the thrifty little bird takes off its improvised umbrella.

J. Carter Beard in *Popular Science News* describes that most skilful feathered architect, the weaver bird, who builds an apartment house. He says: "Imagine a structure built by birds that measure but six inches from the ends of their tails to the tips of their skilful little beaks which is as large as a native's hut,—large enough to shelter five or six men; large enough, in fact, to break down, as it sometimes does, the tree in

which it is built. Nor must it be supposed that the tree selected is either small and weak or brittle. There is a species of acacia known to the Dutch people of South Africa, where it grows, as kameel-dorn, or camel-tree, because they persist in believing the giraffe, which is very fond of its leaves, a sort of camel that has run all the substance of its humps into a neck of preposterous length in its efforts to reach and graze upon the foliage, and this tree the social weaver birds almost invariably and very wisely choose for their nests; or, indeed, its fibre is almost as tough and stout as that of the hearts of the Dutch folks themselves, who have with such indomitable resolution and endurance defended their homes against all invaders.

"The material of which the nest is constructed is no less strong and wiry. It consists of a grass which almost seems as if created for the purpose. So long, so flexible, so unbreakable and untearable are its blades that it makes the best and most enduring of mats, and was formerly used by the Bosjemens, or Bushmen (hence called Booschamannie grass), to weave into impenetrable defences against the javelins and arrows of their enemies.

"A single pair of birds often set to work on a nest of this kind, carrying the grass to a tree and commencing in a wonderful manner to weave it compactly into a little rain-proof roof. The next season the progeny of the parent birds come back, select mates, and the old homestead is enlarged to suit their convenience, much as we have seen some little cabin built about with wings and additions to accommodate married sons and daughters who came home to live with the old folks. The narrow structure now widens, and beneath the compactly woven shelter the nests close their ranks and hang shoulder to shoulder like the shells in the comb of a wasp's nest, and accumulate all the more rapidly that the birds refuse to use a last year's nest, leaving it to various rather disreputable tenants in the way of bats, insects, and reptiles, while they move into clean apartments. In fact, the place is in every respect a tenement house, noisy and thronged with a miscellaneous multitude of all sorts and conditions of folks, each family keeping house on its own account, and often quarrelling, not only

with other households, but among its own members. The roof, however, unlike that of his human prototype, effectually keeps out not only rain, but thieves and murderers. Bird and egg eating snakes and monkeys cannot effect an entrance, and the occupants of the nest are safe."—*Charlotte Harris Allen, in The Young Idea.*

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Contributions to this column may be sent to Miss K. C. Porter, 22 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass.]

I.

I am composed of 45 letters, and form a quotation from a book by G. MacDonald.

My 15, 43, 12, 4, is a prong of a fork.

My 23, 13, 6, is a busy little insect.

My 5, 29, 19, 28, is money.

My 8, 34, 41, 9, is a ballot.

My 45, 10, 38, 14, 26, is an apparition.

My 31, 7, 20, is a wooden tub.

My 27, 21, 3, 24, 36, 40, is a very small twist of flax or cotton.

My 16, 39, 37, is a bulky piece of timber.

My 42, 17, 32, 11, 30, is a kind of green tea.

My 33, 18, 35, is a tree similar to the pine.

My 1, 2, 44, 22, 25, are sounds.

(St. Nicholas.)

II.

Hidden Cities.

1. I will mount them all on donkeys.

2. They burned up aristocrats by the hundred.

3. This opinion I will be constant in, O plebeian!

4. Cucumber liniment is the latest.

5. That hen should be killed.

6. Beauty receives admiration from every one.

7. I hope the pears will prove nice.

8. Don't wake her from her nap, lest she be angry.

III.

Puzzle.

Two-sixths of a potato, one-seventh of a pumpkin, one-third of a pea, one-fourth of a beet, and one-sixth of a carrot equals what vegetable?

IV.

A Nosegay.

1. A charge to a friend.
2. A time of day.
3. A shrub and a wine.
4. A class of single people, and what is always troubling them.
5. What the sun did.
6. What the man did when he proposed.

V.

Instead of complaining when it rains, we should do as they do in Spain. What is it?

VI.

Mathematical Puzzle.

A mother sends her boy to the spring for a quart of water. She has no quart measure and no pint measure, but she gives him a three-quart can and a five-quart can. How does he manage to get a quart?

I.

Answers to Puzzles in May Number.

1. Lack — lacquer.
2. Bow — bower.
3. Ham — hammer.
4. Pond — ponder.
5. Din — dinner.
6. Slip — slipper.

II.

Divided Poets.

1. Shakespeare.
2. Dryden.
3. Cowper.
4. Bacon.
5. Milton.
6. Coleridge.
7. Goldsmith.
8. Wordsworth.

III.

History.

IV.

wonder	sick-spell
tutor	atwist
three-ply	nine-pins
fore tell	tenon
a tea	cup

V.

A radish.

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

In looking back upon the ten years of our Cheerful Letter work, we feel that we have reason to be thankful for the degree of success we have had and for the constantly increasing usefulness of our society. It would be pleasant to give a somewhat full account of what has been effected in these ten years, not for the benefit of our members, since they are fully informed through their own correspondents, but for others who may not realize the kind and degree of the good that has been accomplished, and who, if they did understand this, would be willing to give us a little help toward maintaining and extending our enterprise.

The actual result attained has surprised us; but the possibilities in such work as ours have opened before us to an extent that we did not ourselves foresee. It is not merely, as some of our friends suppose, the cheering of invalids and of lonely people, but an influence for good upon families, and sometimes upon whole neighborhoods. Probably there never has been an opportunity for doing so large an amount of good, with so small an outlay of trouble and money,—so rich a return for so small an expenditure.

We look forward now to acquiring some room for headquarters, and to one paid agent to do a portion of the clerical work,—the keeping of lists and accounts, which has been, so far, wholly cared for by two or three volunteer workers, who have given their time most generously for years in this manner, but who cannot continue to do so indefinitely.

If we could even double our subscription list, it would be a substantial help. There are many people whose houses are crowded with periodical literature, and who do not wish to subscribe to another paper simply because they have no room for it. But here that objection does not apply, since, if we had the subscription, the paper could be sent to some one who is hungry for it, and has been hoping for some time that it will come, some one whose house is as empty of such matter as ours are full. If a thousand people would subscribe for one copy, or, better still, if five hundred would subscribe for two copies, it would probably do good to many more than a thousand remote Western and Southern homes, and place the Cheerful Letter Exchange upon a more firm and permanent basis.

L. F. C.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER
EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,—good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES.

The Travelling Libraries have now become an important part of Cheerful Letter work. In order that this department may be thoroughly organized and systematized, Miss Louise Brown, 79 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass., has kindly consented to take it in charge. Will those interested in these libraries, and desiring information, kindly address Miss Brown as above?

Kindly send subscriptions to the Treasurer, not to the Editor.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be no meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange in July, August, September.

The personal address of our treasurer, Miss Louise Howe, will be Box 21, Nahant, Mass., until farther notice. But subscriptions may be sent to her or left for her at 25 Beacon Street, at any season.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

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SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 373 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, Box 21, Nahant, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.